

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 5002

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR PORG APER
SUBJ: ORGANIZING FOR MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY

REF: STATE 148782

1. SUMMARY: THE DEPARTMENT'S EFFORTS OVER PAST FEW YEARS TO IMPROVE OUR PERFORMANCE IN MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY HAVE BEEN VERY SUCCESSFUL. PRESENT EFFORTS SHOULD BE DIRECTED AT IMPROVING OUR TACTICAL PLANNING ON KEY ISSUES AND REFINING THE PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION WITH EMBASSIES AND, THROUGH THEM, WITH FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS. END SUMMARY.

2. POST APPRECIATES THE OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON REFTEL AND TO SUGGEST STEPS TO IMPROVE OUR PERFORMANCE IN MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY. DEPARTMENT HAS MADE GREAT STRIDES IN THIS DIRECTION IN THE PAST FEW YEARS, PARTICULARLY IN AREAS OF PROVIDING EARLY INFORMATION TO EMBASSIES ON ISSUES LIKELY TO BE RAISED AND USG POSITIONS ON THEM. THE MAIN ROLE OF EMBASSIES IN THIS PROCESS IS TO PRESENT USG VIEWS TO THEIR HOST GOVERNMENTS AND, IN MANY CASES, TO OBTAIN THE SUPPORT OF THAT GOVERNMENT FOR OUR POSITIONS. THERE ARE THREE AREAS WHERE CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT IS REQUIRED TO ENABLE EMBASSIES TO BE MORE EFFECTIVE IN HELPING PERSUADE HOST GOVERNMENTS TO VOTE AS WE WOULD LIKE:
1) AN EARLIER, SHARPER ANALYSIS OF THE KEY ISSUES AND IMPROVED STRATEGIC AND GLOBAL TACTICAL PLANNING ON HOW TO WIN THE
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NECESSARY VOTES ON THESE KEY ISSUES; 2) TIMELY REPEAT TIMELY IDENTIFICATION TO EMBASSIES OF THE KEY ISSUES, AND THE PRIORITIES AMONG THOSE ISSUES FOR EACH EMBASSY (ACCOMPANIED BY THE EXCELLENT TALKING POINTS ON THESE ISSUES THAT THE DEPARTMENT HAS BEEN PROVIDING IN RECENT YEARS); 3) MORE RAPID FEEDBACK ON POSITIONS TAKEN BY OTHER DELS AT INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS, IDEALLY BEFORE FINAL VOTES ARE TAKEN. THESE THREE AREAS ARE OBVIOUSLY INTERDEPENDENT.

3. EACH YEAR EMBASSIES RECEIVE A MESSAGE WHICH DISCUSSES THE

UPCOMING UNGA AND POTENTIAL ISSUES. THIS MESSAGE IS VERY USEFUL IN ORIENTING THE EMBASSY. IT IS, HOWEVER, TOO BROAD AND TOO LONG FOR OTHER THAN BACKGROUND USE IN INITIAL DISCUSSIONS WITH HOST GOVERNMENT AND IS NOT OF MUCH VALUE IN WINNING VOTES ON SPECIFIC ISSUES. THE MESSAGE IDENTIFIES GENERAL AREAS OF CONCERN BUT DOES NOT ADEQUATELY DEFINE THOSE ISSUES ON WHICH A POST IS LIKELY TO HAVE TO MAKE EXTRA EFFORTS TO GAIN THE SUPPORT OF ITS HOST GOVERNMENT. IF THOSE ISSUES COULD BE BETTER DELINEATED AT AN EARLY DATE, EMBASSIES COULD THEN PROCEED WITH DETAILED DEMARCHES EARLY ENOUGH TO HAVE SOME EFFECT ON HOST GOVERNMENT VIEWS.

4. EARLIER IDENTIFICATION OF AND GUIDANCE ON SUCH ISSUES COULD ASSIST EMBASSIES IN ANOTHER WAY. AT THE PRESENT TIME BOTH THE PRIORITY FOR AND TIMING OF DEMARCHES IS RATHER HAPHAZARD. AN EMBASSY MIGHT WELL WEAR OUT ITS WELCOME AT THE FONOFF ON SECONDARY QUESTIONS JUST AT THE TIME A DEMARCHE ON A KEY ISSUE IS URGENTLY REQUIRED, OR BE IN THE POSITION OF MAKING DEMARCHES TWO OR MORE DAYS IN A ROW BECAUSE OF SEPARATE CONSECUTIVE INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE DEPARTMENT. IF EMBASSIES COULD KNOW EARLIER THE KEY ISSUES AND WHAT SUPPORT WAS NEEDED ON THEM, DEMARCHES COULD BE PALNNED IN A MORE EFFECTIVE MANNER.

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5. THE EMBASSY REALIZES THAT THE USUN ANALYZES SPECIFIC ISSUES IN AN EFFORT TO PREDICT VOTING ON THEM, AND WE HAVE NOTED THE DEPARTMENT'S EFFORTS ON SEVERAL VOTES OF GREATER IMPORTANCE TO EMPLOY THE COMMON LEGISLATIVE TACTIC OF DECIDING HOW MANY ADDITIONAL VOTES ARE NEEDED ON A SPECIFIC ISSUE AND THEN DIRECTING SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS TO POSTS IN A CORRESPONDING NUMBER OF COUNTRIES FOR ADDITIONAL DEMARCHES, RATHER THAN SENDING BLANKET INSTRUCTIONS TO ALL POSTS. WE BELIEVE THIS TACTIC, WHICH HAS HAD SOME SUCCESS, COULD BE USED TO A MUCH GREATER EXTENT; EXPECIALLY THE IDEA OF SELECTED COUNTRIES BEING GIVEN GREATER ATTENTION BY EMBASSIES RATHER THAN A WORLD-WIDE SHOTGUN APPROACH. MOREOVER, IF EMBASSIES HAD SUFFICIENT FOREWARNING ON KEY ISSUES TO ADEQUATELY ASSESS HOST GOVERNMENT ATTITUDES, THEY COULD PROBABLY IN RETURN PROVIDE THE DEPARTMENT WITH FAIRLY REALISTIC ASSESSMENTS OF THE POTENTIAL FOR GAINING THE SUPPORT OF A GIVEN COUNTRY. THAT INFORMATION WOULD ALLOW THE DEPARTMENT TO MAKE THIS KIND OF SELECTIVE REQUEST FOR DEMARCHES.

6. BETTER FEEDBACK FROM IO AND PERMANENT US MISSIONS TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IS ESSENTIAL. FEEDBACK PROVIDES EMBASSIES THEIR ONLY GAUGE WITH WHICH TO EVALUATE DEMARCHE EFFORTS. THE DEPARTMENT'S EFFORTS TO INCREASE FEEDBACK OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS HAVE BEEN ADMIRABLE, AND MOST EMBASSIES NOW RECEIVE SPECIFIC DATA ON HOST COUNTRY PERFORMANCE IN MLOS. FEEDBACK CAN, HOWEVER, SERVE AN EVEN MORE IMPORTANT FUNCTION THAN SIMPLY AN AFTER-ACTION REPORT. IF PROVIDED IN A TIMELY

FASHION, IT CAN GIVEN AN EMBASSY THE CHANCE TO CHANGE THE POSITION OF A GOVERNMENT. VERY OFTEN DELEGATIONS ARE INADEQUATELY INSTRUCTED OR GIVEN WIDE LATITUDE BY THEIR GOVERNMENTS. IF THE EMBASSY IS AWARE OF SUCH A SITUATION, PERHAPS AS THE RESULT OF USDEL CONVERSATIONS OR PRELIMINARY VOTES, A DEMARCHE CAN BE MADE TO CONVINCE THE FONOFF TO SEND OR MODIFY INSTRUCTIONS. IF MEMORY SERVES, THE GUAM VOTE OF THE PAST TWO YEARS PROVIDES EXAMPLES OF WHERE EARLY FEEDBACK COULD HAVE HELPED. AFTER VOTES IN THE FIRST COMMITTEE TIME STILL REMAINED BEFORE THE CONFIDENTIAL

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FINAL PLENARY VOTE. UNFORTUNATELY, FEEDBACK AND REQUESTS FOR FURTHER DEMARCHES CAME WITH SO LITTLE TIME BEFORE THE PLENARY VOTE THAT WE--AND PRESUMABLY OTHER EMBASSIES--WERE UNABLE TO MAKE MOST EFFECTIVE EFFORTS.

7. BOTH OF THE ABOVE SUGGESTIONS ARE MADE IN LIGHT OF THE SITUATION HERE IN ECUADOR. ADOPTING THEM WOULD ENABLE US TO INCREASE OUR RATE OF SUCCESS IN OBTAINING ECUADOR'S SUPPORT FOR OUR POSITIONS. THE FONOFF HERE IS SOMETIMES STODGY AND UNRESPONSIVE IN THE FIRST INSTANCE EVEN TO POLITICAL PRESSURE FROM WITHIN THE GOE. ONLY THROUGH REPEATED EFFORTS OVER A PERIOD OF TIME (AND VERY OFTEN INVOLVING PARALLEL DEMARCHES AT OTHER LEVELS IN THE GOE) CAN WE SUCCEED IN OBTAINING A FIRM POLICY DECISION FROM THE FONOFF IN ADVANCE OF A PARTICULAR MEETING. THUS, EARLY AND DETAILED INFORMATION ON ISSUES OF SIGNIFICANCE IS ESSENTIAL. THE FONOFF ALSO SOMETIMES FAILS TO INSTRUCT DELEGATIONS ADEQUATELY AND/OR INSTRUCTS THEM CONTRARY TO OR IN IGNORANCE OF HIGH-LEVEL GOE POLICY. IF WE ARE AWARE OF SUCH AN ATTITUDE IN ADVANCE OF A FINAL OR CRITICAL VOTE, AND IF THE USG ATTACHES SUFFICIENT IMPORTANCE TO THAT ISSUE, WE MIGHT WELL BE ABLE TO MAKE HIGH-LEVEL DEMARCHES AND OBTAIN FIRM, FAVORABLE INSTRUCTIONS. A POSITIVE EXAMPLE OF THIS OCCURRED AT THE RECENT OASGA WHERE WE WERE ABLE TO OBTAIN INSTRUCTIONS WHICH CHANGED THE GOE DEL FROM AN INDIFFERENT TO A FAVORABLE POSITION ON OUR HUMAN RIGHTS RESOLUTION. A NEGATIVE EXAMPLE OCCURED AT THE RECENT ILO MEETING WHERE, CONTRARY TO WHAT WE HAD BEEN LED TO BELIEVE AFTER EARLY DEMARCHES AT THE FONOFF AND THE MINISTRY OF LABOR, THE ECUADOREAN DELEGATION TOOK A NEGATIVE POSITION AT AN EARLY STAGE IN THE MEETING. IF WE HAD BEEN APPRISED OF THAT FACT WE COULD HAVE MADE FOLLOW-ON DEMARCHES AND HAD NEW, MORE EXPLICIT INSTRUCTIONS SENT TO THE DELEGATION. HOWEVER, WE WERE NOT INFORMED OF THE ECUADOREAN VOTE UNTIL ONE WEEK AFTER THAT CONFIDENTIAL

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VOTE WAS TAKEN.

8. THE EMBASSY'S HOPE IS THAT IF AND WHEN RESOURCES BECOME AVAILABLE, THE ABOVE SUGGESTIONS BE CONSIDERED AS WAYS TO BEST

UTILIZE THOSE ADDED RESOURCES.

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